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VARIOUS DECORATIVE CORNERS OF THE HOME.

BY ZEPHO.

ILLUSTRATED WITH SKETCHES BY J. NAT. HUTCHINGS.

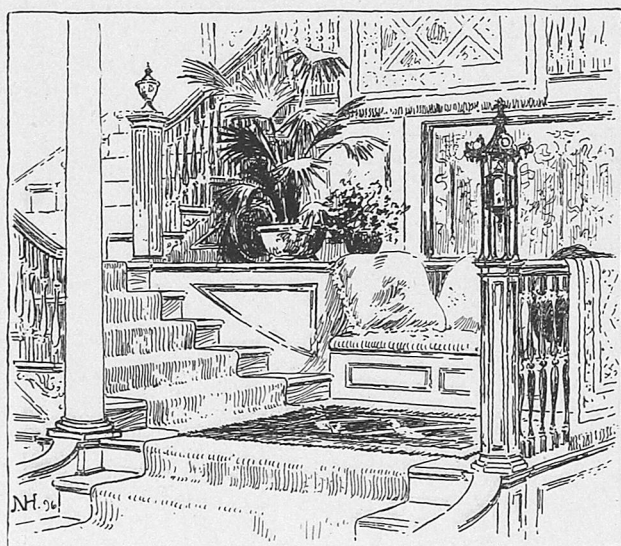


HILE the fashion in house furnishing has in the past few years been gradually tending toward a more comfortable mode of fitting up than used to prevail, there is less of conventionality, more of the common sense element to be found in home fitting than heretofore, and while elegance may still prevail, the tendency is to combine beauty with utility, availability with comfort. The stiffness has gone from our drawing-rooms and reception-rooms; this is even more appar-

ent in the apartments devoted to home rather than to social usages.

While the influence of French style has had much to do with the tasteful fittings of our homes, for the solid comforts combined with good taste we have England to thank in a very great measure, as anyone who has been so fortunate as to visit her beautiful country homes will testify. We of America are quick to appreciate the good things of life, and find time, amid the whirl and bustle of money getting, to make good use of them.

From England comes the modern cosy corner. This came into existence, not only through a love of their æsthetic qualities, but through a natural liking for cosy, comfortable surroundings as well, which seems to be inbred in that home-loving race from which we spring. To make home comfortable, cheering, encouraging to home influences and surroundings—in a word, livable—is to make it attractive. To make it homelike we must attend,



ON THE LANDING.

not only to the absolutely necessary furnishings, but we must look to it that every available corner has its individuality.

There is of course danger of overdoing, and lapsing into "fussiness," but good common sense will come into play, of course, to avoid this. Another strong factor in

bringing about this "livable" quality is worthy of attention, that is, let nothing look too good or too "fussy" for use. No one takes comfort on a couch all "kinks and furbelows," the pillows arranged in stiff, systematic order; there is a certain desirable element of cosiness and



IN THE HALL, OR LIVING-ROOM.

comfort necessary, and this depends wholly upon the taste and good sense of the housewife.

Another point worthy of note: expense is not a necessary factor in such an arrangement; this "comfortable" quality may be introduced by the simplest means, and by the use of the furnishings and materials within reach, aided, of course, by tact and judgment. Anyone with the right sense of decorative fitness may make the simplest things seem pretty and homelike, by their careful and judicious disposition. Color is a matter to be carefully studied, as even the richest materials will look tawdry and garish if wrongly juxtaposed, while, on the other hand, the plainest of materials will satisfy, if they meet the eye agreeably, color being the first quality noticeable in any arrangement of room or dress; everything else being subservient to it.

Many people never reach satisfactory conclusions in decorating, for the simple reason that they get about so far, and, if things are not just to their mind, they pull up and begin over again; this means confusion of ideas, and general dissatisfaction. A safe rule to follow is this: Have a definite idea of the general effect you wish to produce before beginning the work; then carry the idea out faithfully, not being moved from your original design by the appearance of the work when half finished, nor by the passing criticism of friends. It is safe to say, as a rule, that if it does not then quite please, matters may easily be made satisfactory by a slight change in some of the smaller details.

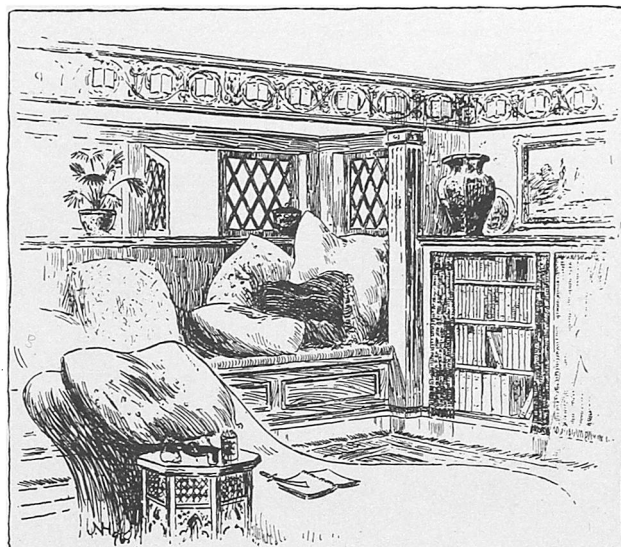
The sketches shown here are offered as suggestions, as few homes would offer the same conditions; but there should be much in their picturesque suggestiveness to afford food for thought and study. Many people are too apt to overlook the opportunities the various little odd corners of the home offer for decorative and comfortable arrangement, or to appreciate beforehand what their beauties may be. Once such elements are introduced into the home, however, they will wonder they have ever got along without them, and will bless the day that their eyes were opened to their advantages.

The first sketch "On The Landing," shows a not unusual arrangement of the stairs in a city or suburban home. The seat is certainly decorative and very suggestive of cosiness; this corner would doubtless be fully appreciated during the intervals of a dance or musicale, and the artistic arrangement of rugs, pillow and decorative plants, with added attractiveness of fair forms and faces, would suggest a picture delightful to look upon.

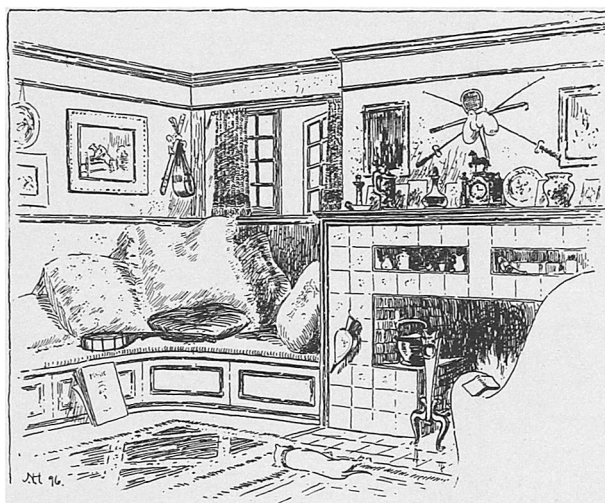
Many suburban halls fill the dual use of both living-room and hallway, and the second sketch, "In The Hall," shows a captivating disposition of furniture, around the never-failing centre of attraction—the open fireplace. In the fall and winter months, the "comfortable" qualities of such an arrangement are very apparent; with the cheerful glow of the open fire, under the soft subdued light from the shaded lamp, a delightful evening may be passed with book or work, regardless of snow and frost without.

"A Comfortable Library Corner," is the title of the next sketch. This design, with the open casement windows, and the air of cheerful "breeziness," is more suggestive of the summer months, than of "winter bleak and drear," but, summer or winter, there is every requisite here for a pleasant hour with favorite fiction or study. The little cluster of pillows, are more than "fetching," with their air of fascinating and luxurious suggestfulness.

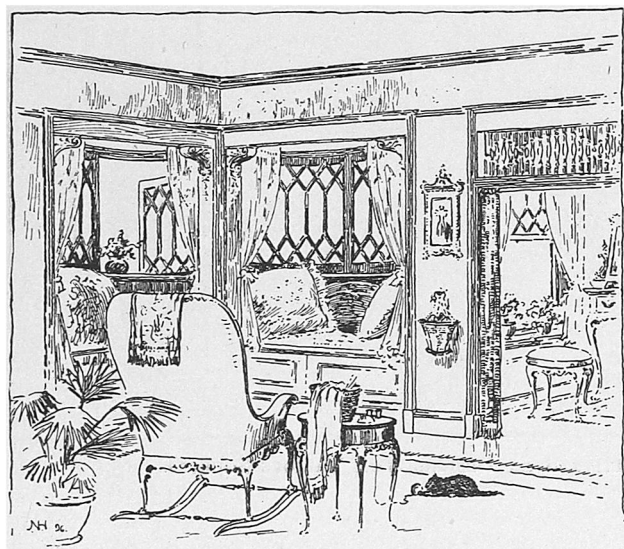
The "lord and master" is not forgotten, as the comfortable looking corner of "The Den" will testify; here the cigar may be smoked, and even a fragrant "hot brew" indulged in, as suggested by the kettle on the hob. There is nothing gives to a room devoted to home comforts, such an air of cheerful hospitality, as the low broad seat around the wall, and it is far from being an expensive fitment, if one has a little taste and ingenuity to spend upon it. Not only has it a comfortable and decorative side, but it has a



A COMFORTABLE LIBRARY CORNER.



THE DEN, OR SMOKING-ROOM.



MY LADY'S CHAMBER.

useful, as well; if made with covers, the box is more than convenient for the disposition of the many little odds and ends so difficult to find a place for, and for the storing the "off season's" clothing in moth-dispelling camphor.

"My Lady's Chamber" has an air of daintiness and fitness about it, that marks it as distinctively effeminate. This is as it should be, as such qualities are attributive of the fairer sex, and any room to have a proper "fitness" should in a great measure suggest the characteristics of the occupant. Especially is this so with a lady's apartment, which should always breathe an air of simple and elegant refinement, no matter what her social position or means.

The cheerful little bays, with their casement windows, cushioned seats and delicate draperies give to the room a character and charm, that require but little comment.

Above all things be consistent in the arrangement and decoration of these odd corners of the home. To be wholly satisfactory they must look "as if they belonged there," not—as is too often the case—like an afterthought; a "fitment" dropped in to fill up and fit a given space. The chief charm of these accessories, is their adaptability to the general scheme of the room, as well as their useful and comfortable qualities. In short, they must not only be attractive, but look as if made for use as well as ornament.

There undoubtedly exists a great opportunity for a comfortable display of taste in these various corners.

In conclusion, I have but one thing to say, and I say it without reserve, and from the bottom of my heart.

Do away with all stiffness and formality in home adornment; put aside frivolities in decorative effect; make your home comfortable, livable and in quiet good taste, and its effects, physically and morally, will be markedly noticeable on all who come under its influence.